AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON ANTECEDENTS OF GENDER DISPARITY AT MANAGERIAL LEVELS AFFECTING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN THE SELECT SERVICE SECTOR IN DELHI NCR.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

to

Manav Rachna University

by

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MANAV RACHNA UNIVERSITY
Declared as State Private University vide Haryana Act 26 of 2014

Date: 20.10.2023

DECLARATION BY THE SCHOLAR

I hereby declare that the short synopsis entitled "**An empirical study on antecedents of gender disparity at managerial levels affecting employee performance in the select service sector in Delhi NCR"** being submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the **Department ofManagement and Commerce** under the **School of Management and Commerce** of Manav Rachna University, Faridabad during the academic year 2023-24.

It is the work that is expected to be carried out under the supervision of **Dr. Pragati Chauhan.**Further, it is declared that the short synopsis is within the plagiarism limit and copy of the same is attached as per the University norms.

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ABSTRACT

Gender disparity at managerial levels remains a pressing issue in contemporary workplaces, despite considerable strides towards gender equality in recent decades.

Drawing on a comprehensive literature review, this study identifies several antecedents that perpetuate gender disparity at managerial levels. These factors include implicit biases and stereotypes, lack of access to mentorship and power networks, work-life balance challenges, and limited opportunities for skill development and advancement. Additionally, organizational cultures that favor traditional masculine leadership traits may inadvertently exclude women from managerial roles, further exacerbating the gender gap.

Gender disparity can lead to lower job satisfaction, lower employee performance, reduced career progression, and increased stress and burnout. Women are often overlooked for promotions and leadership opportunities, undermining their potential contributions to the organization and hindering overall diversity and innovation.

This research aims to explore and study the antecedents of gender disparity and its impact on employee performance. It also focuses on 6 main antecedents

Keywords: *Gender Disparity, Inequality, Barriers, Women Employees, Managerial Levels, Employee Performance, Employee Commitment, Delhi NCR*

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background of The Study

Patriarchy in India has a long history in India and is deep rooted. In fact, Patriarchy has more to do with history of mankind. It has its roots not just in India but all over the world. Historically, women have been the victims of oppression and domination since the evolution of humans and have faced many challenges that their counterparts would never face just because of the gender they are born in. Women were taught to accept their status socially and follow the rules and regulations that were made for them without questioning them. They were taught to be obedient sisters, daughters and wives and learn to respect their elders; they are taught certain manners like how to walk, talk, sit, and work at home etc. They are not given freedom to own their individuality of their own. The position of women in the traditional Indian society is such that many traditional practices are enforced on them like polygamy, early marriage, and illiteracy and restricted to their homes and household work. Unfortunately, many such practices are still running in our country.

There is a large group of women in India working incessantly for the upliftment and empowerment of women. This has been a result of liberalization that brought a shift in the mindset of women and made them think about breaking the glass ceiling. However, the change has been only noticeable over a period of time but not a breakthrough.

On a panel at the 1978 Women's Exposition in New York, Marilyn Loden said "It seemed to me there was an invisible barrier to advancement that people didn't recognize". And from then on, it was called the 'glass ceiling'. And women have been fighting hard to break this glass ceiling ever since.

Women are now keen to come out of their shells, enter the corporates and make a name for themselves. However, they have been facing multiple challenges that might not be apparently visible but existing everywhere, be it households or at workplace.

Status of women in the corporate world is a matter of concern for quite some time, both in India and globally.

Women have been juggling between multiple roles at the same time in household. Not just households, there contributions to the evolvement of society cannot be looked upon. Undoubtedly,

Without their contribution in different domains of society like social, economic or political progress of a country, it would have deteriorated and become stagnant. Things have changed since last few decades and now women are taking up different roles other than just household responsibilities. However, it is ironic that women are not taken seriously by people around be it colleagues, peers or superiors. Because of their obligations to their families, women face difficulties when pursuing careers. Indian women have traditionally taken care of the family, but in recent years, the rising cost of living, adequate education, and more awareness have forced them to pursue employment. It is still the case in patriarchal societies like India that a man should be the main provider for his family. Even though Indian women are beginning to work outside the home, they still have a long way to go in terms of cultural, social, and economic reforms to encourage good shifts in people's perspectives.

The current imperative is to create a society in which women can live freely without fear of discrimination, exploitation, or oppression in order to better the prospects for future generations.

But it still looks like a far-fetched dream? Why? Who is to be blamed? Who is answerable for the immense challenges that women face for fighting for their rights which should have been theirs in the first place?

Talking about the concept of gender disparity, that exists almost everywhere, can be found in different forms. At a workplace, it can be in the form of lack of equal opportunities, promotions, judgements by their bosses and peers, gender bias and lack of support. At household, it is easily visible in the form of personal life pressure, work-life balance, rearing kids alone, lack of support from family, societal pressures and guilt.

When we talk about gender equality, we generally forget the concept of ‘Equity’. When people are treated equally, they have access to the same opportunities and resources. Equity allots the precise resources and opportunities required to achieve an equal outcome while acknowledging that every individual has unique circumstances.

Men and Women are different when it comes to their biology and the expectations that they have to meet. Expectations could be financial, emotional, family-oriented and others. When it is apparent that women have more responsibilities when it comes to society and family, they going out for work have made their lives more difficult. Because now it is not just the family

responsibilities but also the workplace expectations. It is a matter of fact that women face certain barriers just because of their gender they are born to. And if they are working these challenges multiply. On the other hand, men are not at par with women considering their overall responsibilities.

Making laws, rules and regulations that are equal for men and women might appear as equality but it is still missing on the fact that 'equity' is what is needed for women to stand at par with men.

Equity is a solution for addressing imbalanced social systems. It can only happen when the law-making bodies, organizations, unions not only recognize the bias women face on daily basis but also tries to reduce it down by bringing in laws that support them and minimize the gender-based inequalities.

There are laws in place that supports women like anti-discrimination (Equal Remuneration Act, 1976), Sexual harassment (Protection of Women Against Sexual Harassment at the Workplace Bill, 2010, Maternity Leave (Maternity Benefit Act, 1961). There have been reforms that are introduced from time to time in order to give more visibility to women participation at every level. Indian Companies Act, 2013 introduced mandatory requirement of women director on board was one of the major breakthroughs. However, was it just a law on paper or in intention is still questionable.

Gender Disparity leave its traces in every sphere of life. Focusing on the research topic, wherein the focus shall be on low women representation at top level management in the public sector banks, is a matter of keen interest more so because it is an organized sector and the biases and prejudices should have been less. Also, the government rules and policies for both its male and female employees are same and there are less chances of any personal judgements at the time of recruitment, promotion, transfers etc because of the uniform and transparent policies in place. Yet, the low female representation in this sector, gives us a reason to dig out the real problems.

If you want to get up the ladder of success, women have as much ambition as men. With the same passion, they're joining the workforce as well. However, a completely different view is painted by boardroom and top management statistics. Then where's the leak from the pipeline?

Despite the above-mentioned employed women, why is that only a couple of women made it to

very top? While there have been men always reaching the positions of Chairperson & Managing Director, it took more than 30 years after bank nationalization in 1969 for a woman to take the position of head of a state-run bank. Back in 2000, Ranjana Kumar became Chairman and MD of Indian Bank.

This study, therefore, attempts to study the level of acceptability of women managers as leaders in organizations in India and study the organizational and social factors/barriers that lead to gender imbalance at different levels of management (middle and top). This study aims to provide useful recommendations for gender-diversified organizations.

1. Review of Literature

2.1 Theoretical Background

2.1.1 Gender Disparity

Gender differences are disparities in the treatment, opportunities and representation that people experience based on their gender. Throughout history, it has been an issue which continues to be relevant in today's societies. Theoretical frameworks to understand the complex and diverse nature of gender disparities have been put in place, which will provide insight into their roots, causes as well as possible solutions. This literature review aims to explore the key theoretical perspectives that have been used to explain and analyze gender disparities along with its different dimensions and types.

Social Role Theory:

Social Role Theory posits that gender disparities are largely a result of traditional gender roles and expectations imposed by society. In line with this theory, individuals embrace behaviour and attitudes which correspond to the gender roles they are accustomed to in their culture. These roles tend to lead to an unequal distribution of power, resources and opportunities. Historically, women have traditionally been connected with caretaking and domestic responsibilities whereas men's roles are linked to leadership or breadwinning. In these traditional roles, there can be an uneven playing field in terms of education, employment and political representation.

Stereotype Threat:

Another theoretical framework explaining gender differences is the threat posed by stereotypes. It describes the psychological strain people encounter when they are aware of unfavourable gender stereotypes. If women are confronted with tasks that stereotypedly relate to men, such as being in leadership positions within male fields, for example, they may find themselves feeling uneasy and self doubt. Stereotype threat can hinder performance and discourage women from pursuing certain careers, leading to disparities in representation and opportunities.

Intersectionality:

The theory of intersectionality, proposed by Kimberlé Crenshaw, argues that gender differences are not only a result of gender, but are also linked to other social identities, such as race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and disability. The theory points to the fact that individuals are experiencing special forms of discrimination and privilege due to a combination of their common identities.

Patriarchy and Structural Inequality:

A patriarchal social structure is one in which men dominate and exercise main authority, resulting in the subjugation of women. Theoretical perspectives rooted in patriarchy argue that gender disparities are deeply entrenched in societal structures and norms that favor male dominance and control. Structural inequality, rooted in patriarchal systems, can take place in many ways like unequal pay, limited access to education and healthcare, and underrepresentation of females in decision-making roles.

Feminist Theory:

Feminist theory, which critically examines gender differences and advocates for equality between men and women, is a diverse body of thought. A unique insight into the underlying causes and possible solutions for gender inequalities can be found in a variety of feminist perspectives, including liberal feminism, radical or intersectional feminism. These theories challenge conventional norms on women's roles and support changes in policies, as well as point out the importance of female empowerment and agency.

2.1.2 Antecedents of Gender Disparity

There are several factors that contribute to gender disparity at workplace. The antecedents, as we call it, may be organizational, structural, societal, cultural, personal, psychological etc. Several studies have been done on such different factors globally and it is found that most of these factors are common all across the globe. So, the assumption that the factors emerge out of Indian society isn't true.

"According to the logical bias theory of workplace gender discrimination, men in business discriminated against women, and those at the top of the organisation were more prejudiced

against them than those at the bottom. Also, this discrimination is more connected to the external pressure than internal" (**Trentham et al., 1998).**

"Women juggling between motherhood and career ambition will affect the career of working women. There are some common barriers like resistance to travel to far off places, avoiding transfers away from family etc. Women's exclusion from informal networks at workplace which generally consist of men is also a contributing factor to this" **(Ashok Gupta and Koshal, 2001).** Hindu society's traditional authoritarian structure essentially remains unchanged, which causes women to experience role conflict. However, by adapting men's and women's views to the circumstances, these issues can be resolved. **(Wentling, 2003)**

"The perpetuation of current preconceptions against both genders at the individual and organisational levels is influenced by societal issues, which ultimately hinders the growth of women in the workforce" (**Amani Moazzam Baig Mirza and Nasira Jabeen, 2011). "**Gender discrimination is the outcome of organizational practices, such as long working hours, mobility and networking **(Supriti Bezbaruah, 2012)**.

As stated above, the factors are multiple but are exist across the nations no matter what kind of organization it is, what kind of culture is prevalent in that particular society or what background a female employee belongs to. This tells a lot about the deep-rooted conditioning of patriarchy in our society.

2.1.3 Impact of Gender Disparity on Employee Commitment

Gender disparity in the workplace can have a significant impact on employee commitment. Since dedicated workers are typically more engaged, productive, and devoted to their employers, employee commitment is a critical component of organizational success.

Reduced Job Satisfaction: When employees perceive gender disparities, such as unequal pay or limited career advancement opportunities, it can lead to lower job satisfaction. Such dissatisfaction can erode commitment because employees may feel undervalued or unfairly treated.

Lower Motivation: Gender disparities can result in decreased motivation among affected employees, especially if they believe that their efforts will not be adequately rewarded or

recognized. This lack of motivation can lead to reduced commitment to their roles and the organization.

Increased Turnover Intentions: Employees who experience gender disparities may be more likely to consider leaving their current jobs or the organization altogether. High turnover intentions can reduce commitment, as employees are less invested in the long-term success of the organization.

Negative Impact on Well-Being: Gender disparities can negatively affect the mental and emotional well-being of employees, particularly those who experience discrimination or bias. Mental health issues stemming from workplace gender disparities can reduce overall commitment as employees may struggle to cope with these challenges.

Decreased Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) refers to discretionary actions that employees undertake for the welfare of the organization, such as helping colleagues or going above and beyond their job descriptions. Gender disparities can lead to a decline in OCB, as employees may become less willing to invest extra effort in an organization they perceive as unfair.

Impaired Team Dynamics: Gender disparities can also impact team dynamics and collaboration. When employees feel that they are not treated equally due to their gender, it can lead to distrust and strained relationships among team members. This can hinder teamwork and reduce commitment to team goals.

Negative Impact on Diversity and Inclusion Efforts: Organizations that fail to address gender disparities risk damaging their reputation as diverse and inclusive employers. This can make it challenging to attract and retain top talent, particularly from underrepresented gender groups, further affecting employee commitment.

Productivity and Performance: Gender disparities can lead to productivity losses and reduced performance. When employees are preoccupied with concerns about fairness and gender-related issues, it can divert their focus from their tasks, ultimately affecting their commitment to achieving organizational goals.

Legal and Reputational Risks: Organizations that perpetuate gender disparities may face legal and reputational risks. Employees or external stakeholders may take legal action or engage in public campaigns against the organization, potentially harming its brand and commitment from employees.

In conclusion, gender disparity in the workplace can have a detrimental impact on employee commitment. It is essential for organizations to address these disparities through policies and practices that promote gender equality, diversity, and inclusion. Their commitment to their roles ensures that individuals and the organisation benefit, as long as they believe in fair conditions of employment, equitable opportunities and a conducive working environment.

2.1.4 Impact of 'Employee Commitment' on 'Employee Performance'

The employee's commitment has an important impact on the performance of employees. In turn, committed workers are more likely to be engaged, motivated and productive; this has a positive impact on their overall performance. A number of ways that better employee commitment is positively affecting staff performance are shown below.

Increased Productivity: A committed employee will tend to be more focused on his work and is willing to do whatever it takes to achieve its objectives. Their dedication and willingness to work make them more productive, given their lower probability of being involved in time wasting activities or procrastination.

Higher Quality Work: The committed staff take pride in their work and are proud of it. They are thus more likely to take care of detail and be guided by best practices which result in better quality work.

Consistency: Commitment of employees will lead to a higher level of consistency in performance. It is less likely that committed workers have fluctuations in their performance or work quality, which are necessary to perform tasks with a consistent degree of efficiency.

Initiative and Innovation: Commitmented employees are more likely to take on the task of identifying and resolving issues, offering suggestions for improvement or sharing innovation ideas with their organisation. They act as stakeholders in an enterprise's success, and are proactively taking action to improve it.

Reduced Absenteeism: The percentage of absenteeism is usually lower for committed employees. They're more likely to show up at work regularly, and they're less likely to take unnecessary sick days or unauthorised leave.

Lower Turnover: A reduction in turnover rates is related to higher level of employees' commitment. The committed workers are more loyal to the organisation, and may not be willing to look for other employment opportunities. In order to keep a highly skilled workforce, retention of talent is essential.

Customer Satisfaction: The dedication of employees can have a direct impact on customer satisfaction. Superior customer service is more likely to be provided by employees who are committed and dedicated, which will lead to increased client satisfaction and loyalty as well as improved future business.

Team Collaboration: In teams, committed workers tend to work well. They are more likely to cooperate effectively, communicate openly and contribute positively to team dynamics which can help improve overall performance of the group.

Adaptability: The committed staff are, in general, able and willing to make changes. It's open to new processes, technologies or strategies which are critical in the rapidly evolving business environment.

Positive Workplace Culture: The employee commitment is a contributing factor to the positive corporate culture, which creates an environment that gives employees value, respect and encouragement. By boosting morale and motivation, a culture like this may help to improve performance.

Leadership Potential: In the company, committed employees are commonly considered as possible leaders. They are suitable candidates for leadership positions due to their dedication and consistent performance, so that they can still have a positive impact on the work of staff.

In order to improve overall staff performance, employees' commitment has a key role to play. Committed employees are more productive, produce high-quality work, be more consistent in work, and contribute positively to the organization's success. In this way, the priority should be given to promoting and maintaining a strong commitment of staff in order to achieve better performance results.

2.1.5 Gender Disparity in India (Select Service Sector in Delhi NCR)

Despite so many attempts to promote and empower women in workspaces in different organizational cultures and setups, we still are too far from the gender-diversified culture that

we aim to achieve in the near future. There have been so many researches undertaken globally around the antecedents that lead to gender disparity in workplaces, especially in managerial levels that hinders the growth of women employees. However, not much research work has been done in India especially the Capital which is a corporate hub in the country and pretty much represents the working class of the nation. This study, therefore aims to study antecedents (6 selected based on the pilot study) that lead to gender disparity in the Indian context (Delhi NCR) in a select service sector (IT, Media & Banking) that contributes the most to the GDP and has the most number of women intake and yet fail to go up the ladder and reach managerial positions. This paper also aims to provide useful recommendations for making a more gender-diversified organizations.

2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

(Nandy et al., 2014) "Some of the barriers discussed in this study were psychological obstacles, societally related restrictions and organizational constraints. Barriers to advancement, gender stereotypes and other threats from within or outside an organisation persist for women in organisations. Their roles are stereotyped in organizations, and they're not part of informal groups networks or take part in the decision-making process. Because of this, women lose enthusiasm and many a times after leaving the job, never come back. Managerial roles expect person to possess masculine traits but when women show it, they are not accepted as they are not exhibiting feminine traits".

(*Do Women at Top Make a Difference? Gender Proportions and the Experiences of Managerial and Professional Women.*, 2015) "As a function of gender, this exploratory study examined the satisfaction and work experience of female managers and professional women. The number of their organizations as a whole. Managerial and professional women working in skewed or designated organizations, mostly men at all levels and senior management, were less satisfied with their work and reported more intention to leave than women working in organizations with fewer men at all levels of management. The study gives a scope for further study of the reasons behind these findings which may be exclusions of women from the old boy's network in the organizations, potential insensitivity of senior men towards omen, lack of female role models and mentors etc. Many factors were examined in this study like - Gender Proportions, Individual Demographic Characteristics, Organizational & Situational Characteristics, Work Outcomes.

(Stamarski, Cailin S, 2015) In organisational structures, procedures and practice there is a clear complexity in the phenomenon of gender inequality. For women, some of the most harmful gender inequalities are enacted within human resources (HRs) practices. It follows from the fact that human resource practices such as policy, decision making or implementation have an impact on employment, training, wages and promotion of women.

(Stamarski et al., 2015) "Considered factors like Gender discrimination in HR-related decision-making and in the enactment of HR practices, Gender inequalities in broader organizational structures, processes, and practices. (This includes leadership, structure, strategy, culture, organizational climate, as well as HR policies), organizational decision makers' levels of sexism".

(Moazzam, 2017) "Stereotypes have a negative impact on the individual perception of women in professional selection criteria, which was positively correlated with education. But as we move into higher management positions, gender bias arises in the form of culture and social norms reported by a small number of female respondents trying to get their hands on greater managerial posts even though these criteria remain unchanged. The reasons for the lack of women in top management positions have been questioned by all respondents, with females replying that they were unable to do so because of social pressures. Some women blamed the women themselves as being part of the social setup they do not help their daughters and daughters-in-law to break away from this cycle".

(**Jayachandran, 2020)** In developing countries, gender norms form an obstacle to women fully and equally participating in the labour market. The barriers included cultural barriers like- Harassment and violence towards women in public places, restrictions placed on women's social interactions and freedom of movement, control over household finances, intimate partner violence and who should be the breadwinner, who bears responsibility for household chores and childcare, solutions to overturn the norms.

(Ramos et al., 2022) Various kinds of obstacles for women to advance into management positions and perceptions about organizational justice are directly linked. For example, barriers in access to powerful networks of influence and power as well as obstacles related to a good balance between work and life. There is, moreover, an indirect association with various kinds of barriers to women's promotion into management positions. In particular, barriers to accessing networks and obstacles with respect to balance of work and life.

3. Objectives of The Study

The main objectives of the research work are listed below:

1. To explore and study the antecedents of gender disparity.
2. To ascertain the impact of these antecedents on gender disparity in select service sector (IT, Media, Banking) in Delhi NCR.
3. To examine the impact of 'Gender Disparity' on 'Employee Commitment'.
4. To examine the impact of 'Employee Commitment' on 'Employee Performance'

4. Hypothesis of the Study

The hypothesis, that were established to evaluate the research objectives are as follows:

H1(a): There is no significant relationship between 'Biased Performance Appraisal' at workplace with 'Gender Disparity' at managerial level.

H1(b): There is no significant relationship between 'Inaccessibility to power networks' at workplace with 'Gender Disparity' at managerial level.

H1(c): There is no significant relationship between 'Work-Life Conflict' with 'Gender Disparity' at managerial level.

H1(d): There is no significant relationship between 'Unequal HR practices & Policies' with 'Gender Disparity' at managerial level

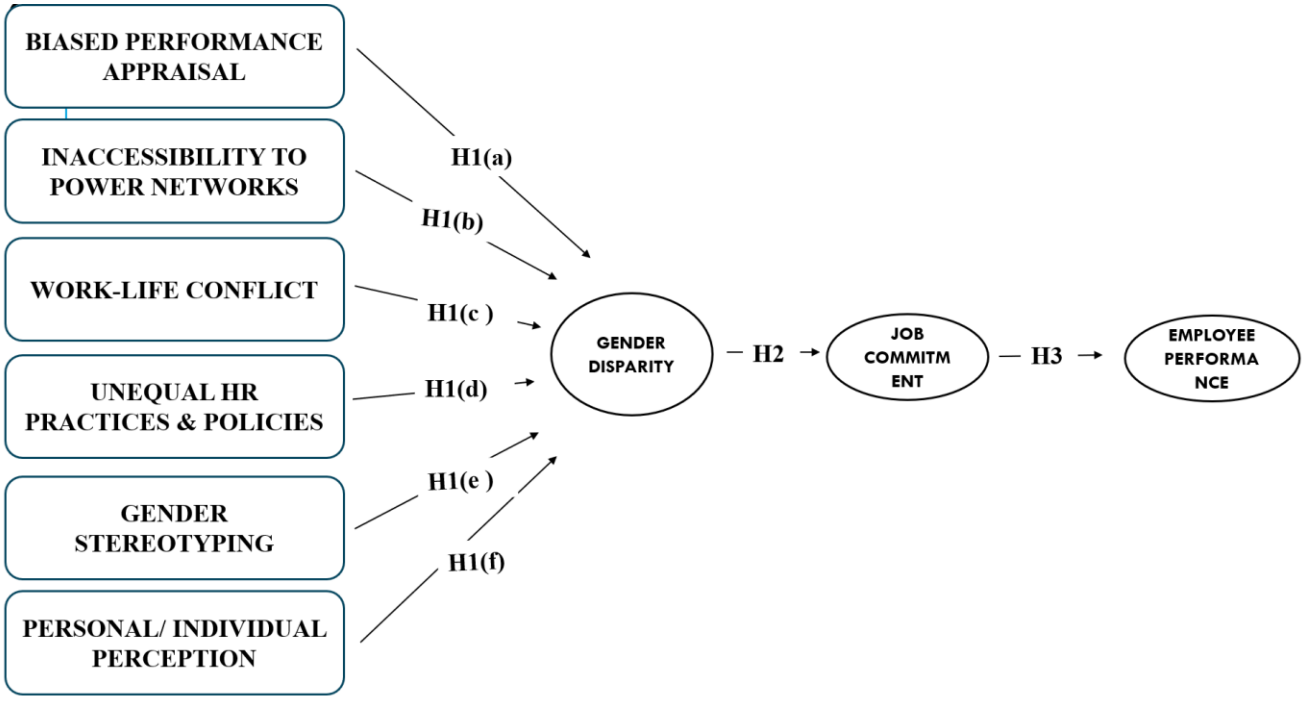
H1(e): There is no significant relationship between 'Gender Discrimination/Stereotyping' with 'Gender Disparity' at managerial level.

H1(f): There is no significant relationship between 'Personal & Individual Perception' with 'Gender Disparity' at managerial level.

H2: 'Gender Disparity' has no significant impact on 'Employee Commitment'.

H3: 'Employee Commitment' has no significant impact on 'Employee Performance'.

5. Proposed Research Model



6. Research Methodology

6.1 Variable of the study are as follows:

- **Independent Variables**
    1. Biased Performance Appraisal
    2. Inaccessibility To Power Networks
    3. Work-Life Conflict
    4. Unequal HR Practices & Policies
    5. Gender Stereotyping
    6. Personal/ Individual Perception

- **Dependent Variables**
    1. Gender disparity
    2. Employee performance
    3. Employee Commitment

6.2 Data Collection

The data collection for the study shall be based on primary data. **Primary Data** shall include semi-structured questionnaires and may include Personal Interviews, Focussed Group Discussion etc.

6.3 Sample Selection

A convenience sampling/Probability sampling method would be used to collect data. The final questionnaire would be distributed online and offline. Focussed Group discussions can also be opted for better understanding. Women at managerial levels (middle and top) shall be targeted in the different sectors to conduct one to one interview.

The sample for this study will be women employees from select service sector (IT, Media, Banking) in Delhi-NCR region. Only women employees belonging to managerial levels shall

be the respondents for this study. The probable sample size would be somewhere between 350 to 400; sample determination by confidence level (95%), margin of error (5%).

6.4 Data Analysis

To conduct statistical analysis and test the hypotheses, structural equation modelling optimized by Amos 25 may be used. Since this technique is well-suited to calculating path estimates and modelling parameters under non-normal conditions, its makes it a widely accepted standard method for data analysis, particularly for large sample sizes. The analysis may be in two stages: first, evaluation of the measurement model using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA); second, applying structural equation model (SEM).

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SRISHTI BATHLA SHORT SYNOPSIS 18.10.2023

by SRISHTI BATHLA

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An empirical study on antecedents of gender disparity at managerial levels affecting employee performance in the select service sector in Delhi NCR.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

by

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Dr. Pragati Chauhan

ABSTRACT

Gender disparity at managerial levels remains a pressing issue in contemporary workplaces, despite considerable strides towards gender equality in recent decades.

Drawing on a comprehensive literature review, this study identifies several antecedents that perpetuate gender disparity at managerial levels. These factors include implicit biases and stereotypes, lack of access to mentorship and power networks, work-life balance challenges, and limited opportunities for skill development and advancement. Additionally, organizational cultures that favor traditional masculine leadership traits may inadvertently exclude women from managerial roles, further exacerbating the gender gap.

Gender disparity can lead to lower job satisfaction, lower employee performance, reduced career progression, and increased stress and burnout. Women are often overlooked for promotions and leadership opportunities, undermining their potential contributions to the organization and hindering overall diversity and innovation.

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